

March 2015

Dear One Voice Partner,

‘One Voice’ in Brighton & Hove

We wanted to write to you to thank you for your commitment to this programme of work which has been led by you and where you have raised a number of areas on which you wanted to see action and support provided.

The aim of the ‘One Voice’ programme is to facilitate communities and those from all faiths, coming together to find solutions to issues that concern us all. In the five (so far – more to be planned) One Voice meetings, those concerns have been openly described by you all and heard by the Chief Executive, Penny Thompson, the Divisional Police Commander, Chief Superintendent Nev Kemp and other senior council (including the Director of Children’s services) and police officers. We are working closely with Fiyaz Mughal, Director of Faith Matters who is co-ordinating our One Voice programme.

At the last meeting on 9th March, we were joined by elected members of the council who gave their commitment to support and provide civic leadership to our programme. That very welcome commitment follows a briefing provided by Fiyaz to all members of the Community Safety Forum. While we have much work still to do, not least to organise our launch of One Voice on 21st May and to seek your energy and help with that, we thought it was about time we updated you on where we have made progress in taking forward your concerns. Those concerns included how we could:

- Build resilience in the city to extremism and safeguard our children and young people
- Tackle intolerance and hate and create a city which respects diversity and feels safe and welcoming
- Engage with the media to achieve positive reporting on all Black and Minority ethnic communities and those of diverse faiths

These are just a few areas that we are working on. We describe below, all our work in progress, new themes of work that were brought forward at the last meeting and some other initiatives which support our work, including those led by the Racial Harassment Forum and the City of Sanctuary.

In summary:

- ✓ We have delivered 3 training sessions on **‘Islamophobia Awareness’** and on **‘Hate Crime & Incident Reporting’**. We have had over 68 attendees, most have been participants from the One Voice programme, joined by others from the Racial Harassment Forum, the further education sector and those who work in other public services in the city. Responses have been overwhelmingly positive regarding these training sessions, with participants placing on record

that the sessions have led to greater understanding of how to deal with Islamophobia and hate crime. **A fourth training session on Hate Crime & Incident reporting is to be held on 14th April (4.00 to 7.00 pm at Brighton Town Hall).**

- ✓ **Being Muslim Being British** training was attended by 24 community members and partners with a 'training for trainers' event planned in order that the knowledge and training can be further disseminated. In addition, teachers from local schools, with specific responsibility for religious, and personal and social health education also received training.
- ✓ The approach of 'training the trainers' has also been followed for eight people who have received the '**Far Right Aware**' package of training. They are staff from our Youth Offending and Community Safety Teams and from the police and local college. The training increases awareness and builds staff skills and confidence to challenge the right wing extremist narrative. Further information is awaited from Northampton University to be provided to those trainers which will enable them to further cascade the training.
- ✓ We have listened to your needs and Fiyaz has organised a '**Media Training session on Wednesday the 25th of March, from 6-9 pm.**' The event is being held at Brighton Town Hall and the trainer has a background in media engagement which formed part of his decade long role as a leading councillor in a local authority. Furthermore, a **reporter from the Argus** will attend the start of the training course and will be open to taking questions from participants about how to engage with press sources and ensure that *your* message comes across as accurately as possible. Please use this opportunity to attend the training and to hear feedback from an Argus reporter.
- ✓ We have acted upon requests that members of the local Muslim community made to feedback their concerns about Prevent (the Preventing Extremism agenda), at a national level. Having liaised with the National Prevent Forum, which is chaired by the Chief Supt of Greater Manchester Police, Sir Peter Fahey, a place has been made available for a representative from the Muslim community of Brighton and Hove. **ACTION: We need to receive feedback as to who that representative will be so that this information can be fed back to Sir Peter's team.**
- ✓ Following action by the Racial Harassment Forum, Imam Uthman Jeewa (from the Medina Mosque) is to be the representative to the **Standing Advisory Council of Religious Education** for the schools in Brighton & Hove. Should the Imam not be able to attend any meeting, Tariq Jung (Brighton & Hove Muslim Forum) and Asmat Roe (Brighton & Hove Muslim Women's Group) will deputise.
- ✓ Parents attending One Voice talked about the need for **safeguarding training in relation to young people** to better protect them from information they could be accessing on the Internet. We have received funding to deliver the '**Web Guardians' Safeguarding Project.** We will be offering the dates for that training very shortly.

- ✓ **Improving race equality and inclusiveness in our schools** is a high priority. Sam Beal (Children's services) is taking that work forward together with Fiyaz. The School Guidance and individual school action plans are being revised and Fiyaz is drafting specific guidance and 'top tips' to support teachers to better respond to challenging conversations in the classroom. These are likely to be launched in September to coincide with anti-bullying week and at the best time when children and school staff are able refresh their thinking about these issues. Reviews are also being carried out of the Equality and Diversity Curriculum Frameworks for primary and secondary schools. Fiyaz is also available for individual schools who may need help developing lesson plans to deal with discrimination and any specific concerns about radicalisation.
ACTION: An update on internet safety work that is taking place in schools is to be provided at the next One Voice meeting.

- ✓ One Voice participants wanted to directly engage with national policy shapers and Members of Parliament from mainstream political parties to talk about **international and national issues that affect them**. This platform was suggested by participants on the Group as a means of being an active part of and having influence within democratic processes through which changes could be made. It has proven difficult to arrange a date for such a meeting which matches the availability of community members with that of the M.P's and policy officers (an initial date in early March had to be cancelled). While such a meeting remains high on our workplan, given that the elections are taking place in less than 8 weeks-time, the next meeting is likely to be convened after the General election and in early June 2015. In the meantime, discussions are ongoing with the Home Office colleagues to set up a **'myth busting' meeting which will provide an opportunity for us to talk about the Counter Terrorism and Security legislation and Prevent** generally. A date will be offered for that meeting.

- ✓ **A BME Consultative Forum for Brighton & Hove and Sussex Police** is being developed, led by Inspector Gareth Davis. A letter of invitation and questionnaire is on its way to you; one of the aims is to gather information about how many people wish to be involved and to be clear about the issues that are of most concern. Your responses will help Fiyaz and Gareth shape the terms of reference and set the date for the first meeting of the Forum.

- ✓ A local branch of the national **City of Sanctuary** is becoming established in the City; the group aims to support those who have fled persecution and violence from other countries and to help them feel safe, welcomed and included. Lucy Bryson is incorporating this initiative in her work with migrants and ensuring it also complements our One Voice programme.

Future Actions

The One Voice meeting on 9th March was attended by many from diverse faiths in the city, taking us even further forward in meeting our ambitions. Those attending suggested that:

- A City wide celebration of the diversity of the City be organised. It was suggested that it should be tied to the World Day for Cultural Diversity on the 21st of May, with a specific working group set up to help and assist in the development of this day. The celebrations would be part of the '**One Voice – Brighton and Hove**' celebrations of diversity on the day. A further strapline was suggested and consisted of, '*We don't tolerate intolerance.*' **Anyone who is interested in being part of this working group should contact Fiyaz on fiyaz@faith-matters.co.uk.** This work is ongoing and we are working to tight deadlines on this. We will also suggest some dates and times of coming together to make the necessary arrangements.
- A separate **web-site, logo and branding** could be developed for the One Voice, Brighton and Hove day of celebration which could also allow participants to feed in written material into the site and be used to put up articles of interest for local residents interested in equalities and diversity. The web-site would link to our Community Safety Partnership website; www.safeinthecity.info which includes hate crime/incident reporting arrangements directly to the community safety team.
- There was a desire for developing **Cultural Spaces** which reflect the diversity of the different communities in the city. One idea was ask the Mayor to host a set of community dinners at the Royal Pavilion which celebrated special days like Vaisakhi Eid and other religious festivals. This would help build a unique identity to the City based on tolerance, pluralism and on integrated and settled communities.

As you can therefore see, there are lots of activities underway though this is ***your work programme*** for what you want to see take place in Brighton & Hove. Therefore if you want to get involved, make a difference and build a useful set of skills in the process, why not volunteer and put your name against a set of activities and contact Fiyaz.

In the meantime, if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Fiyaz Mughal, Director: Faith Matters;
Linda Beanlands, Head of Community Safety, BHCC
Lucy Bryson, Community Safety Manager, BHCC
Nahida Shaikh, Community Safety Manager, BHCC
Sam Beal, Partnership Adviser: Health & Wellbeing, Standards & Achievement Team
Inspector Gareth Davies, Local Policing Team